



JOURNEYING TOGETHER

A weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church

**** To view graphics and a more colorful version, open the attached pdf file. ****

APRIL 16, 2025

CALENDAR

- Thurs, April 17: **Maundy Thursday service at First Mennonite Church**, 4601 Knollton Rd, Indianapolis, IN, 6pm to 7pm
- Sun, April 20: Easter Breakfast 8:30 am
- Sun, April 20: Easter Worship at 10 am
- Sun, April 20: Easter Egg Hunt at 11:30 am
- Mon, April 21: ~~*BRO @ Greenwood Panera, 789 US Highway 31 N, Greenwood, IN~~ **cancelled**
- Mon, April 28: Arlington Woods Neighborhood Association meeting, 5:30 pm
- Mon, April 28: *BRO @ Downtown Starbucks, 430 N Mass Ave, Indianapolis, IN
- Mon, May 5: *BRO @ Greenwood Panera, 789 US Highway 31 N, Greenwood, IN
- Sat, May 10: Arlington Woods Spring Clean up, 8am.
- Mon, May 12: *BRO @ Fishers Panera, 8510 E 96 St, Unit A, Fishers
- Sat, May 17: Celebration of 500 years of Anabaptism @ First Mennonite (see announcement)
- Mon, May 19: *BRO @ Northwest Panera, 6050 W 86th St, Indianapolis, IN
- *BRO: Brian's Roving Office, 9 am – 3 pm

ADMINISTRATION

Mike Wigginton (chair), Andrew Martin, Dan Rosenberger
Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

COMMUNITY LIFE: RELATIONSHIPS AT SHALOM

Linda Showalter (Chair), Bethany Martin, Beverly Smith
Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

Celebrations!

Wed, April 16: Charles and Lorraine Harms, 1971
Sat, April 19: Taylor Cook
Sun, April 20: Nizeet Deiter
Sun, April 20: Carol Weaver
Wed, April 23: Tania Goodloe

DISCIPLING: GROWING IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Carol Bixler (chair), Wilma Bailey, Carol Bither
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Children's Classes

Hall Monitor

April 20: No Sunday School
April 27: Linda Showalter
May 4:
May 11:
May 18:
May 25:

Teachers:

2-yr old class: Abri Hochstetler and Carol Weaver will co-teach
Pre-K and K: Beverly Smith will teach with Joyce Troyer as a substitute
Elementary: Frank Kandel and Rod Maust will co-teach
Youth: Jeanne Smucker and Brad Yoder will teach

Adult Sunday School Classes:

Apr 20: Easter - **No Sunday School**
Apr 27: Salt & Light: Session #5 (page 26) Luke 2:25-35; Confession of Faith, article 8;
Shalom Orientation Class
May 4: Technology & Our Discipleship led by Andrew Martin
May 11: Technology & Our Discipleship led by Andrew Martin
May 18: Antiracism Sunday
May 25: **No Sunday school**
June 1: Child Safety Training

OUTREACH: RELATIONSHIPS BEYOND SHALOM

(chair), Chuck Dunn, Becky Wigginton
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Jim Showalter (chair beginning in September), Angie Buller
VAT Representative: Nizeet Deiter; Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

As we are starting a new year here at Shalom thank you to everyone who has agreed to serve on our commissions. We do have one spot that is yet to be filled. Please be praying for the right person who is willing to serve as chair of the Outreach Commission.

VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM (VAT)

Frank Kandel (Chair), Nizeet Deiter (Vice-Ch) Sam Bixler, Charity Bauman, Grace Rhine
Pastoral Representatives: Brian Bither, Craig Oury

WORSHIP: OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Brittany Bither (chair), Justin Hochstetler, Jeanne Smucker
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Last Sunday (9) was Palm Sunday, which we celebrated by waving palm branches and reflecting on Jesus' most confrontational protest against injustice - the cleansing of the temple. Brian preached from John chapters twelve and two.

This Week (4/20) is Easter! There will be an Easter breakfast at 8:30am, followed by the worship service at 10am, with an Easter egg hunt (but no Sunday school) afterwards. All are welcome to join us as we hear the story of the resurrection from the perspective of the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Next Sunday (4/27) Craig will bring the message.

This week's Prayer List

- **Church:** The **Mara Christian Church** is a church here in Indianapolis made up of Chin Burmese refugees who speak the Mara language. Several years ago, the leaders of this church entered a relationship with Indiana Michigan Mennonite Conference, and we have been fortunate enough to cultivate an especially close relationship with them at Shalom
- **Organization: Anabaptist Disabilities Network** is an organization that connects and supports people who have disabilities, their families, and faith communities to create a culture of belonging for everyone (Contact: Joyce Troyer)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We have been approached by some Shalom neighbors about hosting a Spirit and Place event at our church. The theme this year is "Nature" and we propose activities linked to the Dagne Assefa park and woods. We have about 6 weeks before a proposal needs to be submitted. If we are chosen, the event would take place in November. If you would like to hear more or be involved, contact Becky Wigginton.



If anyone has seen a red, deep dish ceramic casserole pan with white enamel interior, please contact Sheila Abebe at 317-374-8412. It has been missing since the last carry-in in March.

Undoing Patriarchy:

MC USA's latest "Learn, Pray, Join" initiative calls for transformation.

How do we dismantle patriarchal norms in our churches and communities? MC USA's latest "Learn, Pray, Join" initiative – **Undoing Patriarchy** – invites congregations and individuals to explore this crucial question through learning, prayer, and action. Running through mid-May, this campaign equips MC USA members with the tools needed to work toward a more

equitable church and society where all people are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of gender.

“Undoing patriarchy is about reclaiming the radical inclusivity we are called to live out as Christians. As we work to undo systems of exclusion we are living into our faith more fully as followers of Jesus,” said Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, MC USA denominational minister for Peace and Justice.

“Learn, Pray, Join: Undoing Patriarchy” sets the stage for **MC USA’s Women’s Summit**, a powerful, one-day event on July 8, just before the **Follow Jesus ’25** national convention in Greensboro, North Carolina. The initiative is rooted in scripture and draws from **“Laboring Toward Wholeness: A Training on Dismantling Patriarchy,”** a curriculum developed by MC USA’s **Women in Leadership** ministry. This resource, first published in 2021, examines the history and impact of systemic patriarchy while challenging participants to respond with a Christ-centered, intersectional approach.

What to expect: Throughout this initiative, MC USA will offer thought-provoking blogs, compelling resources, and engaging webinars to help participants reflect on gender roles in the church and beyond. Expect deep discussions that will transform not only personal perspectives but also relationships, families and faith communities.

Highlights:

- **Webinar:** April 24 | 2 p.m. ET / 11 a.m. PT – Get an exclusive sneak peek into the Women’s Summit! Join Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, MC USA’s denominational minister for peace and justice, along with Sarah Bixler and Joanne Gallardo, as they explore the power of storytelling, listening, and shared experiences in a panel discussion on “Beholding.”
- **Webinar Recording:** “Women in Leadership: Envisioning the Women’s Summit” – MC USA’s Women in Leadership steering committee discussed the evolution of women’s leadership in the Mennonite church, the need to empower women to live out their callings amid patriarchal systems, and the importance of creating intentional, intergenerational spaces to foster collective women. View it in **English** or **Spanish**.
- **Blogs** from women leaders across the church, featuring voices such as Abby Endashaw, Ana Alicia Hinojosa and Cynthea Millsaps.
- A **prayer** for women by Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler.
- **Opportunities for deeper engagement** through the Women’s Summit and the Women in Leadership ministry.

Stay connected and engage: Want to be part of the conversation? Visit the “Learn, Pray, Join: Undoing Patriarchy” **webpage** for a full list of resources. Subscribe to **PeaceMail**, MC USA’s weekly email newsletter, and follow MC USA on social media

— **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **Bluesky** and **YouTube** — for ongoing updates. ~ Brad Yoder



ANABAPTISM at FIVE HUNDRED

On **Saturday, May 17**, Shalom and First Mennonite Churches will host a festival to celebrate the 500-year anniversary of the Anabaptist movement. Beginning at 9am, we will join together for worship, education, fellowship, and service with seminars, food, and opportunities that we would *like* to offer free of charge. For this to happen, we need volunteers, donors, and a general idea of how many people plan to attend. **So far, we have only received \$210 for this event, which is far short of our goal of \$2,000 that we need in order to bring in a guest speaker and provide a common meal.** Please consider donating by writing a check to Shalom with “the Anabaptist 500” written in the Memo line or giving through the newly added “Anabaptist 500” option on Shalom’s online giving page, which you can find at [this link](#). Also, we are asking anyone who plans to attend to register at [this link](#) so that the planning team can know how to budget and prepare. It would be especially helpful for those who plan to bring children to let us know so that we can determine whether to provide childcare. We are also looking for volunteers to provide snacks, offer information and assistance to guests during the day, and act in a skit during the evening

service. If you would be willing to help in any of these ways, please email Pastor Brian at brian@shalommennonite.com or Pastor Jonathan at jonathan@indymenno.org.

REFLECTION

Jesus Washing Feet John 13:14-17 NIV

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

As we are in Holy Week, I thought it would be appropriate to reflect on something from Maundy Thursday, the last supper, more specifically Jesus washing the disciple's feet. I know that we have varied thoughts about the concept of washing each other's feet. Some find it very valuable while others find it to be weird and unnecessary. I am both camps, I do find it weird, but I also find it to be a moving experience, despite being an uncomfortable task. Sometimes being uncomfortable is a good thing though.

Foot washing was needed in every home in Israel. Why? Not only were the streets dusty and dirty, but they usually contained garbage and waste from the animals who traveled up and down the same streets. People wore sandals without socks and their feet could become very dirty. The custom was to recline around the table at the evening meal. Dirty, smelly feet could make the meal and the fellowship rather uninviting. Slaves or servants were usually provided to wash the feet of guests, and it was a mark of honor for a host to provide a servant to wash a guest's feet. To fail to provide a servant was a breach of hospitality.

Since the last supper was held in a private home, and probably as a secret meeting, we can assume nobody was present to fulfill the task. So Jesus takes it upon himself.

I can hear the responses now; see, that's why we don't need to partake in footwashing, we are not traveling by foot most of the time! We don't have dirt roads! People can now wear socks with sandals (if their sense of style allows them to)! Because of these reasons the church no longer needs to partake in this outdated practice. Which I can agree with most of that, we don't walk in sandals on dirt paths long distances each day, but I'd also say that many of the things that Jesus did and said have more than one purpose or meaning.

There are two different Greek words used for the concept of washing. There is *niptw* which was used of washing only a part of the body, such as the hands, face, and feet. This word is translated "wash" in each occurrence in John 13. The second word is *louw* which meant to bathe the body. It referred to a thorough washing of the entire body. It is used in verse 10 and is translated "He who has bathed (*louw*) needs only to wash (*niptw*) his feet." When Peter refused to allow the Lord to wash (*niptw*) his feet, the Lord responded, "If I do not wash (*niptw*) you, you have no part (fellowship) with Me."

Jesus wasn't going to cast off Peter if he didn't participate and Jesus won't be casting us off either if we do not participate, but Jesus is talking about many things on many levels. There is an intimate fellowship Jesus is seeking here. A closeness within the community where together there is no hierarchy, no gentile or Jew, no male or female, no free or slave, but God's people together, sister and brother, serving each other together.

It is also a remembering and reliving our baptism. Peter wanting Jesus to wash his body completely says there is no need, you have been cleansed already. Baptism has happened, there is no need to repeat that action again, unless of course it was the 16th century and you've been convicted by the idea of believers baptism. There is no need to baptize again because once is good enough. But sometimes sin does reappear, we sometimes put things other than God in front of us and follow whatever that may be instead of following Jesus. So washing of each others feet is not only about taking the position of servant it is also about examining our priorities and again setting aside the things we seek that take us away from following Jesus. As we are not having a Maundy Thursday service this week, I'll invite each of you to think of the other ways we can take the posture and attitude of servanthood to those we come in contact with. ~ Craig

PERSON OF COLOR BIO



Rue Mapp, is a pioneering leader in the outdoor industry, transforming how Black communities engage with nature. Born in 1971, in Oakland, California, she is the founder and CEO of 'Outdoor Afro,' a national not for profit that celebrates and inspires Black connections and leadership in nature.

Mapp was placed into foster care at just 22 months old. She was raised by A.C. and Ella Mae Levias, who had a ranch in Lake County, California, roughly two and a half hours from Oakland. There, she spent countless summers and weekends developing her love for the outdoors. Her time on the ranch, learning to fish, hunt, and appreciate the wilderness, profoundly shaped her connection to nature and became the foundation of her lifelong commitment to ensuring that Black people feel that they belong in outdoor spaces.

Mapp founded 'Outdoor Afro' as a blog in 2009 with the goal of building a community of like-minded people and creating an outlet to reconnect Black people to the outdoors. She recognized that Black people often felt disconnected from these spaces usually due to historical segregation and cultural stigmas. Her goal was to break these barriers and help Black people rediscover nature's joy and healing power. By 2015 she had garnered enough support to take the platform from a kitchen table blog to a full-blown not-for-profit organization.

Today 'Outdoor Afro' has grown into a nationwide organization with over 100 Volunteer Leaders across 32 states who lead 1,200 outdoor experiences each year. These Volunteer Leaders provide leadership, expertise, and community to people seeking a deeper connection and understanding of nature. Under Mapp's guidance, Outdoor Afro has partnered with major organizations such as the National Park Foundation, the North Face, and CLIF Bar. Her efforts have earned national recognition, including accolades from the Administration of President Obama.

Ella Mae Levias, Mapp's adoptive mother, was a well-known seamstress in the Bay Area, and through her young Mapp also developed an eye for fashion. She started by making outfits for her doll collection, honing her skills through her teenage years. As an adult, she successfully created a clothing line called Rulette Wear, founded in San Francisco. This experience eventually inspired Mapp to found Outdoor Afro, Inc., a for-profit venture dedicated to designing outdoor gear and apparel that meets the needs of Black outdoor enthusiasts.

Mapp's book, *Nature Swagger: Stories and Visions of Black Joy in the Outdoors*, published in 2022 recounts her own experiences in nature alongside the first-person narratives of 30 fellow Black outdoor enthusiasts.



**"WHAT WAS MISSING
WAS AN EMPOWERED
STORY THAT LIFTED
UP BLACK JOY IN
NATURE AND SHOWED**



Need something? Have something to give away?

Couch for sale! 36" x 87" footprint. Clean and in good condition. We'll transport if needed. \$100 ~ call or text Jim at 317-727-4922 or Linda at 317-691-3737.



ROUTINE INFORMATION

“SHARING OUR LIVES” weekly power point: We invite photo submissions of events / hobbies / interests in your lives. Send pictures to Linda Showalter at lindashowalter52@gmail.com by noon on Saturday. It will run before and after the service.

BULLETIN INFORMATION:

- Send announcements to Linda Showalter at lindashowalter52@gmail.com by Friday, 10 am.
- **Bulletins** are now attached with the Zoom link for those who are worshipping on Zoom. A link will continue to be sent out each week. If you have a prayer request or announcement you would like to share, **type your request live into the chat** feature on zoom and someone on the tech team will read it to the congregation at church.

JOURNEYING TOGETHER is compiled by Linda Showalter each week. Send information to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday.

SAM BIXLER manages our church directory, email address list, and telephone numbers. You can email changes or additions to the office at office@shalommennonite.com or bixlersc@gmail.com.

CRAIG OURY is managing our Zoom calendar, church calendar, and uploads minutes on the church website. If you need to schedule a meeting using the church zoom account or have minutes to upload, you can email the office at office@shalommennonite.com or craig@shalommennonite.com.

BUILDING USEAGE: If you want to use the building for a meeting or event, please check the online calendar first to be sure it's open, then email Craig at office@shalommennonite.com so he can add your item to the calendar. It's helpful to include the contact person and which parts of the building you expect to use.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL: In addition to our podcast, Shalom has a Youtube Channel. This is an easy way to share the good news with church members past and present, visitors and newcomers, and even outsiders. Check it out at youtube.com/@shalommennonite55.

VIDEO RECORDINGS (MP4) of our Zoom worship services are available online. A link to the worship service recordings is on the Member's page of our website.

Journeying Together is a weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church:

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Pastors: Brian Bither, (317) 332-7320; Craig Oury, (301) 302-3181

Vision & Accountability Team: Nizeet Agular, Charity Bauman, Sam Bixler, Frank Kandel, Grace Rhine
Pastors Brian Bither, Craig Oury